

17

THE
BEGINNING
AND
PROGRESS
OF A
Needful and Hopeful
REFORMATION
IN
ENGLAND.

WITH
The First Encounter of the Enemy against it,
His Wiles Detected,
AND HIS
Design (t may be hop'd) Defeated.

London, Printed in the Year 1691.

THE
BEGINNING
AND
PROGRESS

OF A
Needful and Helpful
REFORMATION
IN
ENGLAND.

WITH
The First Encounter of the Enemy against it
His Wiles Detected,

AND HIS
Design (as may be hoped) Detected.

London, Printed in the Year 1691.

To the King.

SIR,

THAT I have written so plainly as I have done, of Matters so much concerning your self and your own Actions, was not for any want of Affection either to your Person or Cause, nor yet through any insolent Humour; but from great Affection to your Person, great Concern for the happy Success of your Majesty, in your not only justifiable, but commendable and honorable Undertakings; and above all, Fidelity to God, who, I was satisfied, had raised you up, and whom I desired you might follow Faithfully and Fully, as those happy Captains of old. But I soon perceived you, to my great Grief, to be in great danger to be misled, and I took the most effectual Course that I could, to prevent it, that you might be sensible of it in time.

This I did as an Honest Man, a Loyal Subject, and a Faithful Friend to my Country: But now I can with some Assurance and Confidence say something more; that the Hand of God was in it; I have had Experience for the time of four Apprenticeships, of the unhappy Consequences of such a Miscarriage of my own, in a Case, wherein few or none, that I know, were likely to have directed me better. And I have been trained up for near as long in such Exercises of Fidelity to my nearest and dearest Relations and Friends, which were at the time no less troublesome to my self than ungrateful to them. But these are things I little thought on, till not long since, knocking at one of their

To the KING

Doors, (where I had been once an intimate and a welcome Guest, but upon such an occasion for many Years after a Stranger,) all this matter was very clearly opened to my mind; and ever since I have been very sensible that there was a special Hand of God in it all, from my first speaking to your Highness (as then it was) at Dorchester, my drawing the Declaration after at Henley, and all that I have done since; though I knew it not; only I had the Comfort of my Sincerity and Fidelity to God and Man. And what I wrote at first, but conjecturally concerning the Persons and Counsels, which have misled you, Time and the special Providence of God, have since confirmed, and given me clearer Evidence of it.

This Age is thought by many to be as Learned and Knowing as ever any was: for my part I know none that I think more conceitedly Ignorant: Learned in Languages, in Books, in Notions and Opinions of Men, in Sophistry, and the superficial Ornaments of Learning; Skillful in disonest Craft, which they call Policy; and experienced in the Anatomy of Sublimary Creatures; I easily grant: But for the Interiora Recum; intimate Acquaintance, and Spiritual Sensation (as one calls it not amiss) in the Great things of Religion, Profound Understanding in true Wisdom, and Knowledge of the Powers of Nature, in these I take it to be very short. And for particular Persons, I doubt there are few equal to some who have lived in Ages reputed the most Ignorant and Unlearned. As for Religion I know very well, and can say it with Confidence, that both the Conformists and Non-conformists are all inexcusably Faulty in the External part of it; and I doubt will be found as defective in teaching and inculcating some of the most important Doctrines of it concerning the Internal. The Reformation was a necessary Work, and the Work of God; but Men have carried it on with too much of a Humane Spirit of Opposition; which hath, indeed, cast out many Abuses of the Church of Rome, but seems to have left them divers excellent Virtues, and
other

To the KING

other good things to themselves. (This hath caused the Fruits of the Reformation in all parts to be so Mean and Barren, and every day more and more dwindling, till almost all was, by degrees, over-run with Ambition, Covetousness, Sensuality, and at last with Atheism, Infidelity, Profaneness and Debauchery, and Contempt of all Religion. And for the great and important Matters of Religion, many great and learned Men of this time, seem no better to understand and use the New Testament, than the great Doctors of the Jews did the Old in our Saviours. And where Religion is so defective and superficial, I am certain there can be little of Profound Wisdom. Nor do I admire at this at all; for I see very few, who take the right way to attain it, but most many ways run from it: First, in pursuit of the Profits and Preferments of the World; and when they have obtained them, by the use they make of them: And besides all this, the vulgar Learning of the World, as it is used and pursued, is as great a Diversion as any thing I know: Inasmuch that in those Matters one may more easily meet with sound Advice and Direction from a sincere, religious, experienced Christian, than is well acquainted with the Sacred Scriptures, and a Book or two of Devotion, and no more, than from any of our Pharisaical Doctors, who look Huffing and Big, and with empty Oratory and Sophistry, draw ignorant conceited People after them. And I dare confidently affirm, that diligent Study, and conscientious Observance of the Canonical Scriptures, the Books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, and Tho. à Kempis his Christian Pattern, shall make a Man not only a better Christian, but a wiser Man even in the Management of Civil Affairs, and the Business of the World, if he apply himself to it, than all the Systems of Divinity, Esoticks, Oeconomicks and Politicks, and all the Learning besides, that this Age hath produced, without the true Power and Spirit of Religion. I value Learning and learned Men, as much as any Man doth, if it be joyed with solid Virtue: But among learned Men, I

see

TO the KING.

See many, who are meer Dragons for the Wise, only they
grasp at their own Honour; and those I pity, to see them
so near Wisdoms Gates, and not to find the Entrance. But
others, who are Cheats, and having first corrupted and de-
ceived themselves with the Shells and Superficials, or some
mean part of Learning, or Skill, are very dangerous to be
relyed on for their Judgment, in Matters which require the
best Advice that can be.

I have once before touch'd upon this by way of Caution,
when I did only, though strongly, suspect that your Majesty
might suffer some Inconveniencies by some mistaken Counsels.
But I now write more Freely and Confidently, because now
I know that it hath been so; and I should be heartily Sorry,
that it should continue so longer. I know the Affairs of
your Majesty have been from your first Access to the Govern-
ment here, greatly prejudiced by the Evil Counsels of some
Men, and I know the Men, some of them at least. I know
your Affairs have been greatly prejudiced both here and be-
yond Seas, and if you remove not some Persons farther
from you, and cast some ill Men from your Favour, you will
meet with many Rubs and Difficulties, and your End will be
Inglorious. You have been misled into the rough and crooked
Ways of the Wilderness, (which I understand very well by
many Years grievous Experience;) Unto the path of the plain and
happy Way of Abraham. You came into this Land under the
Hand of Divine Blessing; but you have fallen from this
State, and since been only in a State of Misery and Re-
jection. The Work of God indeed hath gone on, and must
go on, and you may be made use of in it, but you will meet
with many Crosses, and miss of your wish, in what concerns
your self, unless you can recover your former State, (which
though not Impossible, I have found to be very Difficult,
and intelligent and faithful Guides in such cases I had be-
met with. The great Doctrine of Repentance corrupted,
and abused by the Papists; and it is imperfectly, nay and
falsely, taught amongst the Protestants.) I make no differ-
rence,

To the KING.

rence, whether Conformists or Non-conformists. **N**o There is a necessary and an indispensible part in many cases, and many times, when the **Sin** is secret, what is, Giving Glory to God, which I have hardly ever known mentioned, but never treated by any so purpose. The Ancient Christians understood it well; the S. Scriptures express it by doing Works meet for Repentance, and Judging our selves. But the Spirit of Opposition hath almost suppressed it amongst us, and thereby betrayed many Poor Souls; so that the Neglect thereof dasheth them to the long, it may be all their days, under the Judgments of God; which might be avoided, if this Doctrine was truly taught, and Wisely and Faithfully Practised.

Such a Judgment I have mentioned in the following Tract upon your Majesty; the mention of which to the Counsels of Flesh and Blood may seem to expose your Majesty, and strengthen the Hands of your Enemies; but the Truth is not so; for it will have a quite contrary effect, unless the Fault be in your self. It was mentioned for the Glory of God, and for a necessary Admonition for your own Good; for the Conviction of those who have misled you; that seeing their Error, they may be so much the more concerned that you may be set right; and for the Consideration of those who desire to be Faithful to you. And if you humble your self under the mighty Hand of God, give Glory to him in owning his Hand in it, and apply your self resolvedly to Works meet for Repentance, he will certainly raise you up above all your Enemies: Nay, your Humiliation and Acceptance of his Correction, is the first step of the only ready way to recover your self, and gain an Augmentation of your Honor. We all are Spectacles, not only to Men, but also to the Angels, but such especially as are called or lead to any special Service; and if They do not actually Glorifie God in the Works to which they are called, there are those Ministers of his, who will secure his Glory in the Execution of his Judgment upon them, until they know that the

most

To the KING.

most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. But this is not all, the next step is the Works of Repentance, *Eminent Acts of the contrary Virtue to what hath been done amiss, steadily pursued with great Resolution, upon all just Occasions.* And such an Occasion is now offered in the Matters related in the following Discourse, which may prove of evil Consequence to be either neglected or lightly put off. It is true, the Honor and Authority of her Majesty, which ought to be as dear to you as your own, is concerned in it; and the Honor of your own Administration no less. But you are to look beyond all this. It is more properly (and indeed indispensably) your Office to be Active and Magnanimous in maintaining the Laws, and the due Execution thereof, than in Fighting our Battels. *This is the part of a General, this of a King.* And this is properly that, wherein you are Gods Deputy and Vicegerent. And the Faithful Performance of the Charge of this Relation to him, is always to be regarded far above all Transitory Honor and Temporal Considerations whatever; and doth often require a greater Magnanimity, than to charge an Enemy in the Field. This may be done by a Brutish Courage, wherein an English Mastiff is equal to the greatest General in the World; but that is peculiar to Man, and so the Noble Creatures above him. And so the Faithful Performance thereof, a generous Magnanimity is so requisite, that God himself prescribed it as a necessary Qualification in his Judges. And so this, if I be not greatly mistaken, your Majesty is specially, and doubly obliged, as Matter of Duty, and as one of those Works I have mentioned before.

But this is but one of them, it is not a bare Execution of the Laws, that those Obligations of yours extend to, but a Vigorous and Magnanimous Prosecution of the Ends of these Laws, which is the Suppression of all Wickedness and Impiety, by all the Means, wherewith by Law you are invested; by which Virtue and Piety may be encouraged, and

Vice

To the KING.

Vice and all kind of Wickedness discouraged and suppressed. To conquer the Vices of a Nation is a more glorious Work than to conquer their Armies: And this is to be done more effectually by resolute and constant Demonstrations of your Favour and Displeasure towards the greatest Persons of the Nation, as they deserve, than by the strictest Execution of the Laws, were they severer than they are, against those of meaner Quality, without it. And if you have not Zeal enough, nor Charity enough, nor Courage enough, nor true Wisdom enough, to do this generously and resolutely for the Honour and Service of God, the Good of the People committed to your Charge, and the Satisfaction of a good Conscience, your Religion is vain, your Courage brutish, and your Wisdom Foolishness with God, (not to say Earthly, Sensual and Devilish) and God will certainly lay your Honour in the Dust, should you so neglect His for Fear of Man; which always brings a Snare. He is in truth not a King, but a Slave, or hath little Esteem for Virtue, that wants either the Power or the Will to have Vertuous Persons only to attend upon himself, or the Person of his Queen. He is not fit to be a Bishop, or Superintendent of the Congregations of a City, who cannot order his own Family; much less is he fit to be a King, who cannot model his Court according to his own Mind. The leudest of Men even Common Soldiers, may be reclaimed by Discipline; and are thereby restrained from those Enormities, to which they have greater Temptations than to Swearing, and other Sins which Christianity prohibits. And where they are not, Experience proveth it is for want of real Virtue in their Commanders. Much more may those, who often appear in a Prince's Presence, if the Prince hath Piety enough to desire it heartily, and Manly Magnanimity enough to try it to purpose. If in such a Cause as this King James had ventured his Crown, he could never have lost it; for God and Man would have been for him. And this must be done now, if it was more dangerous than it is; some eminent Acts of this nature must be done, before the former prosperous State can be recovered: And more than this; for there is no such Danger or Difficulty in it, as some vain Politicians would pretend.

To the KING.

The first regard in all our Actions ought to be to God Almighty, from whom we have our Being, upon whom we do depend, and to whom we owe and must give Account of all our Actions, and of the Employment of all our Powers and Faculties and Opportunities for his Service. The next regard, but subordinate to that, is to be to the Good of Man: And this our Gracious God accepts as a principal part of his Service: It is in effect the same which Daniel recommends to the King, as a proper Means to recover the Favour of God, and avert the Judgment decreed against him. Wherefore, O King, let my Counsel be acceptable unto thee; and break off thy Sins by Righteousness, and thine Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor. Ambition of Domination, and misful Encroachments upon the Rights of others, is abominable in the sight both of God and Man, and mightily aggravate any former Offences, especially when under Correction. But when these things are really abandoned, and it is manifest by a constant course of Actions, or some sufficient Demonstration, that the Honour and Service of God, and the Good of a People is sincerely and principally intended, this engageth both God and Man to favour such a Person. And this I dare say with great Confidence, and without any partiality on behalf of my own Country, that there is not a Nation under Heaven that naturally produceth a braver People, or more easily governed by a Wise, Just and Generous Prince than this; a People more Faithful, more free of their Person, or more Courageous in any Undertaking. Let them but enjoy their Rights, and they are easily pleased; but they are naturally honest, and plain-dealing, as generous Minds always are; and abhor tricks and underhand Practices, which have been the common, if not only Politticks of the late Reigns. This and maintaining Favourites, who have been the Masters and Instruments of such Policies, have made the Government uneasie to the People, and the People to appear otherwise to the apprehensions of Strangers, than their Natural Genius really is, when all proceeded from the Imprudence of the Princes, and the Baseness and Corruption of some Evil Men, who most easily innumerate into their Favours, by such Arts and indirect Means.

To the KING

Means, as the Genuine honest English Genius disdain'd and could not brook.

And now Sir, If you will follow their Methods, and make use of their Instruments, you must beware how you disoblige this and that Lord and their Parties; for the People seeing you set up a separate Interest of your own against theirs, and to enrich your self, and a Party of corrupt dishonest Favourites, make use of the old Arts to pick their Purses and cheat them of their Subsistence, they will be ready to close with any in the prosecution of the means of their Relief; as they did with your self against the like Practices of your Predecessor. But if you be resolv'd to demonstrate your Virtue and Magnanimity, for the Honour and Service of God; first in constant effectual discouraging and suppressing of all Prophaneness and Debauchery, and encouraging Vertue and Piety (which is agreeable to the English Genius naturally disposed to Religion;) and next (destroying those former vulgar Policies, and rejecting those few Vermine and Beasts of Prey, which those degenerate Reigns had fostered and bred up) in acting only upon the plain and easy genuine English Principles of true Policy, Justice, Providence, Industry, maintaining the Rights of the People; punishing Delinquents (though otherwise the greatest Favourites or useful Ministers) in the clear Justice of the Laws; exacting nothing by indirect Means, but retrenching needles and excessive Salaries, Pensions, and Expenses; craving nothing but upon just and evident occasions, and employing it accordingly, for the common Benefit of the Nation, making those things, which are in truth your proper Charge and Business, your principal and greatest Care, Endeavour, and Design; these Means will certainly give you that Favour and Power with God, and that Empire and Command in the Hearts, Purses, and Actions of this People, that will set you far above all Temptations to mean Compliances with vicious Persons, be they never so great and powerful; or any Faction whatever at home; and make you a Terror to your Enemies abroad.

The Direct Way to all this is plain and easy to be found, if carefully heeded and observ'd; but so different from the vulgar

Tract

TO THE KING

Tract of Policy and Wisdom of the World, that it cannot be
 seem Folly and Madness to such Abderites. It requires only a con-
 stant Attendance to the End, and an inviolable Magnanimity, to
 walk steadily in it. These may make that Noble Virtue so much
 extoll'd in Sacred Writ, which overcomes the World, if the Heart
 be pure, and the Eye fixed upon the End, the Way will easily be dis-
 cerned; and then if there be true Magnanimity to proceed, (with-
 out which there can be no complete Virtue) no Monsters of Menor
 Devils can hinder the Progress, but serve only to make the At-
 chievements the more Glorious. Yet such there are which must
 be encountered and subdued, and the most dangerous of all the
 very first, that Monster of Self, which is the Devil in Man, and
 will certainly play the Devil indeed, and confound us, if not
 thoroughly cast out, and carefully watched and kept in subjec-
 tion. It will defile the Heart, dimme the Eye, and by some ignis fa-
 ctus mislead a Man out of the true Way, the only Way of Gods
 Blessing; and then he certainly falls into the hands of some of the
 other Monsters, who are permitted to worry him till he recover
 the right way again. But if this first be cast out, and constantly
 kept out, the rest will easily be vanquish'd and put to flight, and
 have little Power to hurt him. Of these, some are easily known
 by their monstrous Horns, Bars, Eyes, Tongues, Talons, Tales,
 cloven Feet and filthy Odor; and a noble Hero may subdue them
 by his ordinary Resistance. But there are others the more dan-
 gerous because, though in truth as very Monsters as the rest, they
 can pull in their Horns, and so disguise themselves, that a Man
 may be in danger, and be dammish'd by them before he be aware.
 They are of the Nature of Foxes (or Wolves in Sheep-Clouthings)
 Syrens and Remoras; and they are to be subdued by the Hero
 himself, or by a Band of select Champions. The subduing of all
 these at home (which is not hard) would make your Conquest of
 all abroad easier, your self a Glorious Instrument indeed, and
 these Nations Happy. Which is the only aim in all this, and
 the hearty desire of

Your Humble and Faithful Subject

thought which never to meet Appearance of Humane Power and
 Affliction, that are easily parted and over-powered, and then
 Work, Labour, is not turned to the Disadvantage of what
 was proposed. But when the Work is of God, though the
 Progress be never so small, the Means never so difficult,
 the Instruments never so unlikely, it must stand; and the Gates of
 Hell; that is in the Scriptures

BEGINNING and PROGRESS

Of a Needful and Hopeful

REFORMATION, &c.

Nothing can be so well and commendably done, as
 but the Wit and Malice of Evil Men, through the
 Instigation and Assistance of the Apostate Spirits
 (who rule in the Minds of all such, and carryn
 them captive at their Will) is able to misrepresent it as evil, a
 blame worthy and detestable. Nor ever was, or can any
 thing be well undertaken, and begun for the Glory and Ser-
 vice of Almighty God, the Honour of the Christian Reli-
 gion, or the Good of Mankind, but it always hath, and certain-
 ly will meet with all Opposition possible, by those Princi-
 palities, Powers and Wicked Spirits, with whom we contend
 in those unhappy Subjects of their Empire of Darkness, in
 whom they really act, riding them as an Ape a Mastiff-Dog;
 though their proper Residence be in the vast Regions of the
 Air. And when mortal Men undertake any such real Good
 Works upon their own Head, in their own Strength pre-
 suming upon that, or other plausible Work for their own
 Glory, though under the Self-deceit of a better Design,
 without the Presence and Assistance of the Invisible Mini-
 sters of the Divine Providence, and out of their Conduct,

vd

B

though

though with never so great Appearance of Humane Power and Ability; they are easily baffled and over-power'd, and their Work defeated, if not turned to the Disadvantage of what was propos'd. But when the Work is of God, though the Beginning be never so small, the Means never so difficult, the Instruments never so weak or unlikely, it must stand; and the Gates or Ports of Hell; that is, in the Scripture-sense, the Grand Sessions of Devils, with all their secret Councils and Cabals, and all their Power, shall not be able to prevail against it, or defeat it. It is true, wicked Men shall have only a Temporal Reward for their Service; and those who do not fully follow the Divine Conduct, but either seek their own Glory more than the Glory of God, or yielding to the deceitful Counsels of Worldly Wisdom neglect what is most for his Honour and Service, shall be blasted, and lose the Honour they might otherwise have acquired: But the Work shall go on and succeed notwithstanding, and all Opposers be crushed and oppress'd, and deceitful Workers confounded. This is strange Doctrine and new Philosophy to the Sentiments of this degenerate sensual and brutish Generation: But it is in it self notwithstanding old, true, and certain. And whoever they are, who either in publick or private Affairs, act without due regard to those Invisible Powers, they act but as Brutes, Fools, and People in the dark, though they may seem to be very successful in many respects: For never was any considerable thing done in the World, without the Interposition of some of those Powers. Of most of this some Instances may be observed in what follows.

The King was no sooner invited to the Administration of Affairs in this Nation, than he was to the exerting of his Authority, and the Reputation and Advantages, which God had given him, toward the most necessary Work of a Reformation of that Wickedness, and those abominable Impieties which had overspread the Nation, and provoked the Judgments of God against his Predecessors, that he might there-

by

by secure the Blessing of God upon his Administration: But it is not strange, where Christ had his Messenger, the Devil had his Ministers, *Blasphemes* like, to pervert the Right Ways of God, and turn away his Deputy from the Faith and Belief of those things, which were so necessary at that Time and Season. And though the same Necessary Work hath been divers times, upon special occasions, much pressed since, yet nothing hath been produced by that means, unless that *Letter to the Bishops*, which commendable indeed in it self, yet was so defective in respect of what ought to have been done, that it may justly be feared, that it had no better Acceptance with God than it hath had Effect amongst Men to this purpose. True *Philosophers* have for many Ages been little regarded in Princes Courts; but for the most part been misrepresented and excluded by Sycophants, Flatterers, and the Masters of vulgar Politicks, not to say Pimps and Panders, and the most dissolute, licentious, and worst of Men. But though the Evil Counsels, which for some time have prevailed, and intercepted from the King that Honour and Success, and from the People those Benefits, they might before this time otherwise have enjoyed, were long secret; yet by the special Providence of God they have since appeared in publick: And it may be hoped, as it is our Duty to pray, that God will, notwithstanding all former Errors, yet give their Majesties understanding to discern the vast difference there is between True Wisdom, and the Evil Counsels of such Vulgar Politicks, both in the Event and in the Principles.

The same Necessary Work hath also been proposed to the *Parliament*, but there stop'd and suppress'd, by the mean Prudentials of such as ought to have been, in a special manner, the most generous and zealous Promoters of it: But as since that time the Good Providence of God, and the Wisdom of his Majesty hath supplied us with some Persons, from whom we may expect better things, so that Good Providence of God hath not been wanting to his own Work in

other respects ; and from a small Beginning, will, I doubt not, carry it on to Perfection, through all Opposition, and to the Confusion of all, who shall dare either openly or secretly to give any interruption or disturbance to the Progress of it.

About this time the last year, the Officers and Inhabitants of the *Tower Hamlets*, upon occasion of their Majesties Proclamation for the apprehending of Highway-men, Robbers, &c. considering that Common Bawdy-houses were the usual Nurseries and Receptacles of such evil People, resolved to use their utmost Diligence and Endeavours to suppress the same; and for that purpose, drew up an Agreement in Writing, under the Hands of many of them, which was afterwards prosecuted with very good Success. And this was remotely the occasion of another Agreement, of which I shall give a more particular Account, as followeth.

One of these Subscribers, coming afterwards to live in the *Strand*, recommended this, and proposed something of the like Nature to a Gentleman, whom he believed to be ready to embrace and promote any good Proposal for the Benefit of his Country; and who thereupon proposed it to some other Gentlemen of his Acquaintance, whom he thought had Leisure, and were well affected to such Works; who likewise readily embraced the same. And they all agreed to meet once a Week, not at any certain Place, but such as from time to time they should think most convenient, to consider of some such Undertaking, and to promote in what they could.

But those Gentlemen being all but one private Persons and living in several Parts, and not likely to be constantly Resident and Inhabitants about *London*, could not conveniently engage in any such Parish work; but leaving that to the Inhabitants of the several Parishes, thought something of a more universal Nature, and such as private Persons by their Pains and Purse might promote, more proper for them; And thereupon began to consider how they might best pro-

mote

more the Execution of such Laws, as we have against all manner of Swearing and Cursing, and considering that all this Mischief, which like a Torrent had overspread the whole Nation, and all Ranks and Degrees of People in it, proceeded indeed from the evil Examples of the late Reigons; but yet received great Encouragement from the Remissness and Negligence of the Magistrates and Justices of the Peace, in not duly executing the Laws, as by their Oaths they are obliged to do: This appear'd a Difficulty to use their Power to overcome, and for which no proper and effectual Remedy could be thought on below Her Majesty's Authority.

It was then not long before a General Sessions was to be held at *Wicks Hall* for the County of *Middlesex*; and Her Majesty was no sooner mov'd for her Letter, to recommend and require the strict Execution of those Laws to the Justices there, than she did most readily and graciously receive the Motion, and commanded a Letter presently to be prepared as full as might be for that purpose. And as well for a memorable Instance of her Piety and Verity, as for the Authority of it, and relation to her present Business in hand, I think fit here to insert it, as followeth.

Maria R.

Trusty and Well-belov'd, We Greet you well. Considering the great and indispensable Duty incumbent upon us, to promote and encourage a Reformation of the Manners of all our Subjects, that for the Service of God may be advanced, and those Blessings be procur'd to these Nations, which always attend a Conscientious Discharge of our respective Duties, according to our several Relations, We think it necessary, in order to the obtaining of this Publick Good, to recommend unto you the putting in Execution, with all Fidelity and Impartiality, those Laws, which have been made, and are still in force against the Prophanation of the Lords Day, prophane Swearing and Cursing, Drunkenness, and all other lewd, enormous

mens, and disorderly Practices, which by a long continued Neglect and Connivance of the Magistrates and Officers concerned, have universally spread themselves, to the Dishonour of God and the Scandal of our Holy Religion; whereby so it now becomes the more necessary for all Persons in Authority, to apply themselves with all possible Care and Diligence to the suppressing of the same. We do, therefore hereby charge and require you to take the most effectual Methods for putting the Laws in Execution, against the Crimes above-mentioned, and all other Sins and Vices, particularly those which are most prevailing in this Realm; and that especially in such cases where any Officers of Justice shall be guilty of any of these Offences, or refuse or neglect to discharge the Duty of his place for the suppressing them, that such an Officer by his Punishment may serve for an Example to others; and to this end we would have you be careful and diligent in encouraging all Constables, Churchwardens, Headboroughs, and all other Officers and Persons whatsoever, to do their parts in their several Stations, by timely and impartial Informations and Prosecutions against all such Offenders, for preventing those Judgments, which are solemnly denounced against the Sins above-mentioned. We cannot doubt of your performance hereof, since it is a Duty to which you are obliged by Oath, and are likewise engaged to the discharge of it, as you tender the Honour of Almighty God, the flourishing condition of his Church in this Kingdom, the continuance of his Holy Religion amongst us, and the Prosperity of the Country; to and so we bid you farewell. Given at our Court at White-hall, the 9th. day of July, in the Third Year of our Reign.

To our Truly and Well-beloved
the Justices of the Peace for the
County of Middlesex at their Hall

By Her Majesties
Command:

Nottingham.

This

This was the Lesson, and, besides others, afterward, it had this happy Effect, or Consequence, at least, immediately following: In that late the Dutch Embassy, the Dutch it was believed to the Justice, the Eleventh they made their Order pursuant to it; and the very next day, it is observable, had we that famous *Willor in Ireland*; as if the Almighty, who by his Wisdom disposeth the Times, Seasons, and Circumstances of all things, designed that very time for the Engagement, (which, as I take it, either party then intended,) to demonstrate or signalize his Favour upon so small a Beginning of a Reformation: good that would be the result.

No doubt but some, who think themselves wise, will smile at least, or shake their Heads, at this Observation. But they must know, that it is not *Wisdom*, but often folly and stupidity, not to take notice of such Minute Things, as the Vulgar (even of learned and Reputed Wise Men) little regard. And though from such Circumstances considered alone it may not be fit to be very positive in concluding such Inferences, yet from a concurrence of divers Circumstances, a truly Wise Man may receive such satisfaction for the happy and successful guidance of his Actions, as the *Wisdom of the World* is not capable of. And the Truth is, *Divine Indications* are for the most part rather by such secret Hints and unobserved Admonitions, as the wisest of Worldly Men would overlook, than by such sensible Indications as might move a Horse or a Mule; though even such are often overlooked by many who think themselves wise, and too often by such as are in some degree Partakers of the true Celestial Wisdom. Because they regard not the Works of the Lord, nor the Operation of his Hands, he will destroy them, and not build them up. But, whose wife will ponder these things, and they shall understand the *Everlasting Kindness of the Lord*. And therefore passing by former Occurrences, upon this Occasion I think fit to add here a brief Observation upon some of this Year. In the War in Ireland His Majesty was concerned in Interest more than in Plour; because he was not

not engaged in Person in it, and it was not managed under his immediate Conduct. But in the Common Cause of all the Confederates he was more concerned in Honour, being personally engaged in it. A Noble Confederacy; it is indeed and a Just and Honourable Cause; and it hath been bless'd with no mean Success in general. But if we consider the Particulars; though there hath been nothing wanting, either of Courage, Activity or Conduct in the King, and he had a great and powerful Army under his Command; yet hath he so failed in Success, that he hath been able to do nothing at all. Ireland hath been reduced without him; the Emperor's Forces have had such Success against the *Turks*, when they were more in danger to have been destroyed by them, than to have obtain'd such a Victory, that the *Turks* have been forced to a Truce: And those in *Savoy* have had the like, forcing the *French* General to retire into his Master's Territories. But those under the immediate Command of King *William*, have been like the bewitched Cart, I formerly mentioned, and been able to effect nothing at all; but on the contrary, he suffered some Diminution of his Monarchy at the beginning, by the loss of *Monsieur* before his Face; and some also, in conclusion, by the *French* falling upon his Rear: I know that short-sighted Men can easily satisfy themselves with some supposed visible Causes of all this. But whatever they think, these things are ordered by a secret Hand of Providence; which, no Man, who hath any true Sense of Religion, can deny. What then may be the Reason of this, in relation to that over-ruling Providence? I will not say again what I have so often said; and since a third Years Experience hath now confirmed what I said at first. It is true, the Work of God doth, and must go on, and succeed; and he hath, and I believe must still have, for some time a great Hand in it; but I doubt, unless he be better advised, and take better Counsels, it will be but of Service, not of Honour; that part will be given to others: Notwithstanding (as it was said to *Barack*) the Journey that thou takest

left shall not be for thing honour. Jud. 4. 9. Which words have been much in my mind this Summer. And there is besides a farther danger, lest what he hath gained already he may not longer enjoy than is necessary for this Service. I writ not this to prejudice his Majesty or his Service; but in very Faithfulness to him, and that both he himself, and those about him who are well acquainted with the Main Principles of Religion, and heartily desire his Well-fair, may be moved to take these things, and the Questions not long since published into serious consideration, and discern wisely what is to be done. But he must have a care whom he trulleth: for the case is not easily discerned by every Doctor, much less how hard it is, when a man is once surprised, to get out of it, and what are the most absolutely necessary Means in order thereunto. And He hath been too much deceived and misled already.

This is no impertinent Digression from what I was about, for his Majesty is equally concerned in what follows, as well as what goes before, and they are nearly related the one to the other. And therefore I now proceed: The business by her Majesties favour succeeding so happily, these Gentlemen farther considered, that if the Justices should be as ready to issue out their Warrants according to their own Order, as they had been to pals their Order in pursuance of her Majesties Letter, yet that could have little effect, unless people could be prevailed with to give due Information of the Offences every where committed against the said Laws, as they should have occasion to know, and take any special notice of them. And for that purpose they agreed to persuade as many as they could, not onely to give Information of all such Offences of this kind as they occasionally should take notice of; but moreover, as their leisure should permit, to go out into the Streets and Markets, and publick places on purpose, and to observe the peoples behaviour there; and of such Offences as they observed to be committed against any of the said Laws, to give information to

some Justice of Peace at their next leisure. And a considerable number they prevailed with to doo this, merely out of a commendable Zeal for the Honour of the Christian Religion and the Church of *England*, and a just Abhorrence and Detestation of those unmanly and wicked Abominations which are every where committed to the offence of all who have any spark of true Religion, Vertue or Consideration in them; they being all of them persons of the Church of *England*, and such as frequent the Prayers of the Church and the Sacrament.

And because in so populous a place, and where Impiety and Wickedness was grown so impudent, the Informations against such Offences daily committed were like to be many; for the Ease of the Justices of the Peace in issuing out their Warrants (for which no Fee is to be paid to their Clerks) lest it should become tedious to them, and so become neglected, these Gentlemen, at their own charge caused Blank Warrants to be printed, for all such occasions, and besides provided and imployed six persons in several parts of the City and Suburbs to fill up the same, as the case should be, for any who should be willing at any time to give Information thereof to any Magistrate or Justice of the Peace: so that the Justice had ordinarily no more to doe but to examine the person upon his Oath, and sign and seal his Warrant, unless there might be occasion for any little alteration in it; and the Informer had a much easier dispatch than formerly, when he must attend the leisure not onely of the Justice himself, but of his Clerk too, till he could have leisure to draw his Warrant, which was often a great discouragement to him to trouble himself another time.

This done, unless the Justice would please to take the trouble upon himself to send the Warrant to the proper Officer (which he ought to doe, and could command no body but his own Servant to doe it) to ease him also of this trouble, it was ordered that the person who should give the

the Informations should be desired to bring back the Warrant signed to him that fill it up. And another person was employed to call weekly for all Warrants signed and sealed by any Justice of the Peace, and then to carry them out and deliver each of them in the several Parishes to some proper Officer of each Parish where it should be executed. And for this they allowed him out of their common Stock half a crown a day.

And lest the Business after all should receive any disappointment by the Neglect or Misarrange of the Officers to whom the Warrants should be delivered, the persons deputed to fill them up were ordered to keep an Account of the several Offenders, the Offences, the time and place of the Commitment, and of the respective Justices of the Peace who should grant the said Warrants; and he who was employed to carry them out, was likewise ordered to keep a like account of the respective Officers, names to whom he delivered them, to the intent that the Registry might thereby be made of all to be delivered to the Justices of the Peace at their Petty Sessions in their several Divisions, to enable them the better to examine the Officers how they had executed the several Warrants delivered to them, and to charge them to account for the several Penalties by them levied. And the said Justices of the Peace, having thus ordered matters between these parts, they farther intended how they might promote this happy beginning to other parts of the Nation; with to that end and purpose issued the Order of Sessions for *Middlesex*, and the like Order of the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen to be presented in similar manner, and to be sent into all parts of the Nation; at their own charges, hoping that other Cities and Counties would thereby be provoked to follow for good example, and shew their readiness of themselves to gratify her Majesty's gracious and pious intentions. As the County of *Gloucestershire* and the City did, having timely notice of the same Quarter Sessions, and others, as I said, have done the like since.

This was a Business which they could not begin-
ning could not be carried on without some Change; and
therefore for that purpose they presently agreed to raise a
Common Stock by their own voluntary Contributions. And
though they resolved to spare neither Pains nor Costs; for
the promoting of it, yet being most of them private persons,
they thought it most prudent upon discrete considerations
to manage it with as little noise as might be; and with all
the *Privacy* that a business of this nature is capable of. And
had continued so to do; had not the Malice, Misrepresen-
tations, and Calumnies of some evil persons, at *West-
minster Hall* and *St. James's Palace*, of their Proce-
dings necessary for a just *Redemption* of their Innocence,
Honest and Commendable Design and Undertaking.
It is true, it could not be expected but that many *Offen-
ders*, who were punished by the Justice of these Laws,
would be incensed against all such, as they should know to
have any hand in promoting the Execution of them; yet
likewise such *diffident*, *timorous*, and *cowardly* persons are
unwilling to be resisted within the limits of Religion,
Vertue or Sobriety; and in this have observed that many
such as are *affected* with the *Government*, have as much as
any opposed and exclaimed against this Execution of these
Laws, principally, and with the greatest heat and indigni-
ty, because recommended and required by the *Divine*
Authority. But that being nothing to all this Proce-
ding contrary to Law; on which any private person might
not lawfully be concerned in; but all designed and directly
tending to the promotion of what her Majesty had sol-
emnly recommended and required for the Honour and Ser-
vice of God; and the good of the Nation; there could be no
doubt of the Approbation of her Majesty and of all good
people, if it should at any time come to be known. And it
was all so contrived for the Ease of the Magistrates and Ju-
stices of the Peace; that upon that single consideration it
might well be thought to deserve not only their Approba-
tion, but the like of all

tion, but Thanks also and special Encouragement. But there are two other Considerations in the Case, which ingenious minds would have been sensible of, and affected with: the one, that what was done, was for promotion of their own Order; the other, the Honour that was done them by recommending their Example to the whole Nation. And great pity it is, that a Party of unworthy persons gotten into the Commission of the Peace of this County should have so far prevailed upon some of their fellows, as by their Rashness and Inconsiderateness, (to say no worse,) to bring a blemish upon the Bench, where notwithstanding (to doe them right) were many worthy persons, who utterly disliked their Proceedings, besides many others of worth and quality who were absent.

It is certain that no part of the Nation doth more abound with persons of worth and well qualified for the Administration of Justice than this part of *Middlesex*, near *London*: and yet it is commonly said and believed, that it hath usually had the unhappiness to have more notorious, corrupt, mercenary, and ill men in Commission of the Peace than any County of *England* besides. And the reason may be supposed to be this. Hither is the common resort of the dreggs of the whole Nation, and (besides many other vicious and licentious people) of many persons of broken fortunes, and many Lawyers who have neither Abilities to get into practice, nor Vertues to be contented with their own Estates; and what they might honestly acquire by such employments as they are qualified for. And whereas in other Countries there is nothing of Profit to be easily gotten by being in Commission of the Peace, which might invite any to solicit to be in, but a certain Charge attending it, in this it is commonly said and believed, that some Justices of the Peace do usually take 200, or 300 *li.* per annum for their places, or more. And it is not unlikely, if it be well looked into, that there may be found at this time in Commission of the Peace for this County diverse persons of very ill Morals, of profane

and light Conversation, of decayed and broken Fortunes; and some professing the Law, who have little or no Practice, unless as Justices of the Peace, and who have used great sollicitation by recommendations to get in, and some who may reasonably, and are suspected to be no good and faithful friends to this Government. And from some of these Gentlemen, probably, the violent Opposition that hath been lately made to those honest and commendable Endeavours of the Gentlemen before mentioned for promoting her Majesties Pious and Honourable Intentions, and the very End of the Order of Sessions, hath proceeded.

Though the Order of Sessions upon the Queen's Letter was passed without any interruption and with great expedition the very next day after the receipt of the Letter, and and in like manner such an other Order in the City by the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen not long after, though without any such Letter to them directed; yet it soon appeared that some *Magistrates* in the City, and *Justices* in the County were not so forward to observe their own Orders and execute the Laws as was expected. This appeared by the treatment, which divers met with, who offered to give them Informations; but were put off, checked and discouraged for their pains. And it was observed that several who were most bold in the business were such as were believed not overwell affected to the Government. And also occasioned those *Questions* which were printed in the *London Mercury*, Sept. 5. which are not improper to be here inserted, as followeth.

1. Whether an Alderman in the City, being a Justice of Peace, or other Justice of the Peace in the County, receiving a note or Information upon Oath against any Person, who is or may be punishable by the Law, and subject to be taken, or is sent out by Warrant for the Punishment thereof, upon legal Conviction, doth not thereby violate his Oath of Justice of Peace, and become guilty of Perjury before God?

2. Whether

2. Whether for that Cause, especially if his Refusal be common and notorious, though it be not punishable by the Statute against Perjury, he may not be punished by the Common Law?

3. Whether it be not a plain indication that such a Person hath little or no sense of Religion, or of the Fear of God in his Heart?

4. Whether, it being plain Matter of Fact, that many addicted to the late King James are so far transported with Faction that they not onely refuse to observe our Solemn Fasts, but oppose the Reformation of the manners of the Nation, in Opposition to the Queen's Authority recommending the same, such Refusal as aforesaid be not an Indication that such Aldermen or Justices are no better Friends to the Government and Nation, than they are to Religion and Vertue?

5. Whether it be not fit that their Majesties be informed, and that they both out of Duty to God and Care for the good Government of the Nation, take Notice of such Persons, and not suffer the Execution of the Laws to be longer intrusted with them? Or, Whether the Government of a Nation may intrust the Execution of the Laws to such inferior Magistrates, as may be justly suspected to be neither well affected to Religion nor to the Government?

6. Whether it be not the Duty of all good Christians, and of all sober People, who wish well to their Countrey, to Note such Persons, and to esteem them as Heathens and Publicans, or no good Friends to their Countrey or the present Government, and to avoid them?

These were Questions one would think, no man who had either Knowledge in the Laws, or Affection to Religion, Vertue, or Sobriety, could be offended at; yet were there some Justices at a petty Sessions, not long after, who were so much concerned at them, and had so little discretion, as to discover their defect in both by great heat and warm discourses, to have the Mercury suppressed, and when they knew not how to doe that, to have the Authour of them bound to his good behaviour, if they could know who he was, (yet was

he one not hard to be known, and who never disowned his own acts.) And these sort of men, no doubt, readily struck in to give some check to these Proceedings.

But when diverse of those who were persuaded, and out of a pious zeal for the correction of that Profaneness and Debauchery which they frequently met with, resolved to give Information thereof, found such cold Entertainment and Discouragements from some, they first applied themselves to, their good Affections to so necessary a Work, suffered them not to desist for those discouragements, but rather to seek out for other Justices of the Peace, where they might have better Treatment and an easie Dispatch to return to their own employments, being most of them Tradesmen. And when they met with this from some others, but especially from Mr. Ralf Hartley, a sober, vertuous and generous person; they daily more and more resorted to him; so that in some time there were some hundreds of Informations brought to him, and upon due Examination he granted his Warrants accordingly. But such was his Caution to keep within the bounds of the Law, that his house being within the Liberties of the City, if any came to him to his house, he always refused to act any thing of Justice business there, but directed them to some place in *Middlesex*, as his occasions lead him, where they might come to him, and that once known more came to him.

Among so many Informations, it were a wonder if no involuntary Mistakes were committed: yet it seems they were so few that Malice it self could find out no more than two that carried colour enough to ground a Calumny upon: and two possibly there were: the one, The Owner of a house, and his Tenant (they say he was) lived both in the same house, which is an Ale-house: so that many might not know which of them kept the Ale-house. But if there was any mistake in this, it was an involuntary mistake: but the house was truly ascertained in the Warrant: the other, A Woman, who buried her Husband, married another, but yet being

being commonly called by the name of the first, as is frequently such as had not heard of his Death might well suppose him still living. And this, if it was so, was such another Mistake as the former; but neither of them any fault in the Justice. And yet these are all the Faults that are particularly assigned in these Proceedings; which is a great Evidence of the Injustice of the Calumnies raised against him.

Y There is *one thing more*, which hath been made use of for a Ground, and very Artificially dressed up into a fine Story, though it be in truth no more than this. One day there came to Mr. Hartley to his House a Person, whom he knew not, about some Warrants: Mr. Hartley being busy, and before resolved not to meddle with any such Business there, ordered him to come to him to *Lincoln's Inn* to a certain Chamber, where he had appointed to be at a certain Hour, and where these Gentlemen divers times met, but at this time were only Mr. Hartley, Sir R. B. and Mr. T. the Owner of the Chamber. When the Man came there, he proved to be a *Constable* of the Parish, where Sir R. B. lived, of whom Sir R. had heard great Complaints for Misbehaviour and Neglect of his Office; and meeting him so Opportunely, reproved him for it, and threatened to have him punished if he did not mend his Manners, as any one else might have done, without personating a Justice of the Peace. Besides this one Constable, there was never any at that Chamber with any of these Gentlemen, but one, whom Mr. Hartley once sent for to secure a Drunken Man, who with a naked Bagonet frightened the People as they went along the Fields, and was by some of them brought before him there. And these were all the Constables that were ever there. Nor had Mr. Hartley ever signed more than two Warrants at that Chamber, or any Warrants at any other Chamber in *Lincoln's Inn* above twice or thrice, when these Matters were so misrepresented the last Sessions.

ON This is the Truth, the full Truth, and nothing but the Truth, of all the Matter which a Combination of some Justices of the Peace at a Publick Sessions at *Hick's-Hall*, have lately Maliciously, Falsly and Scandalously misrepresented in a Formal Order of Sessions, under pretence of an Information to the Court, and in a Report of a Committee (to whom this mighty matter was by the Order referred to be examined,) grounded upon Oath

(as they say) of I know not whom, I know what I say. This Language, though it may seem strange to some, is no more than is necessary and decent in this case. Wherein the Persons intended behaved themselves not with that Gravity, Justice, Uprightness, Candor and Integrity which becomes Judges and Magistrates; but as some little peddling, mercenary Lawyers use to do; who if they happen to get some little brangling Cause, think they do bravely well, if in the opening of it they can but set it out with Colours, feigned Aggravations, and little Strains of Wit or Oratory, though for want of solid Matter and good Evidence upon the Tryal, it redound to their own Shame, and the confounding of their Cause. Just so have these Men done, to the exposing of their own Wants both of Religion, Virtue, Law, good Manners and Discretion, and to the Scandal of the whole Bench and Commission, and deserve no better but to be treated by all Men with Indignation and Contempt, as will more fully appear hereafter. But in the mean time, that they took their ground from that one Passage betwixt Sir R. B. and that Constable, may be presumed from these Circumstances, that it was at that Chamber, that Sir R. B. Mr. Harshy, and the Owner of the Chamber were all three there at that time, and they only, which did not often happen, there being other Gentlemen besides, who did use to meet, and not always there, upon the same occasion, not one of whom, it seems, their Worships had any notice of.

Some Gentlemen undoubtedly were drawn in to concur very innocently in these things, through the confident Pretences of others of the Informations they had received; and though some others might readily concur out of Prejudice, against the Execution of those Laws; yet that which at first seemed to move the greatest Heat, was a Supposition of some considerable Profit, which those Persons, who were at such Charge, and took such Pains, must certainly put into their own Purfes. And great talk there was of the Ways how it might be done, doubtless by some, who better understood the Trade, than the Office, of a Justice of the Peace, and were displeased that any such Advantage should be intercepted from themselves, by such as were not in Commission of the Peace; and therefore had no Pretence for it. And it seems, and is very likely, that this Business was consulted, and a Party prepared for it, before the Sessions; who thereby got Advan-

Advantage to carry it with the less Difficulty: But this Supposition at the Sessions, when better considered, was found to void of all Evidence or Probability to support it, that we find nothing of that now either in the Report or Order preceding, though it was much talked on at the beginning of the Sessions. But the **Order of Sessions**, which bears date *Octob. 12.* runs in this Form: *bona*

This Court, being informed that *Sir R. B. Bar.* hath set up an Office at *Lincoln Inn* in this County, to superintend the Actions of their Majesties Justices of the Peace for this County; And hath caused several Orders and Warrants to be printed without lawful Authority so to do; And by the Aid of *Ralph Hartley Esq;* one of their Majesties Justices of the Peace for this County, hath caused several Convictions to be made against several Persons within the said County contrary to Law, doth think fit, and accordingly Order that, &c. [the Names of the Twelve good Men are spared, though it be more than some of them deserved.] Justices of the Peace, or any three of them be, and they are hereby desired to meet, at *Hicks's Hall* in this County on *Tuesday Morning* next, and examine into the Truth of the said Information; and by what Authority the said pretended Office is set up and managed? and by whom? and to what end and purpose? What Inhabitants of this County hath been committed of any, and what, Offences, by colour and means thereof? and to certify their Opinion upon the whole matter unto this Court on *Friday* next. And it is further ordered by this Court, that the several High Constables within this County do forthwith Summon the Petty Constables within their respective Divisions, to bring into this Court, on *Thursday Morning* next, all such Warrants as remain in their Custody for the Levying of any Summ or Summs of Money upon any of the said Inhabitants upon any Convictions for *Tipling*, exposing of *Fruit* or other Goods to sale on the *Lords day*, or any other Offence for the Prophanation thereof.

And for prevention of any Irregular Proceedings in the Conviction of such Offenders for the future, this Court doth recommend it to the respective Justices of the Peace of this County, in their several Divisions, to Summon such Offenders before they be convicted of any Offence, and to inform such Offenders of their Accusers, and Offence of which they are accused; and not to convict any Person in his Absence, unless after such Summons he neglect or refuse to appear before the Justice according thereto: And that no Justice of the Peace of this County do convict

any such Offenders out of his own District; nor discharge any Offenders convicted of any Offence at any Petty Sessions hold out of his Division; but that it shall be left to the Direction of the Justices of the Peace within the Division, where such Party is convicted, to admit such Offenders to Bail, if they find it convenient.

Per Cur.

Harcourt.

How this Court was informed, or by whom, I find so hard to learn, that I vehemently suspect there was no such positive Information ever given in Court at all. However, the first part of it is false, and contains no less than a triple Falshood: 1. That there was any such Office: 2. That there was any set up by Sir R. B. 3. That there was any for any such End, to inspect the Actions of the Justices: The second part is disingenuous; for both the Orders and Warrants are known to be such, as, though they had had no special Authority for Printing them, needed none; and therefore an Evidence of Dishonesty and Injustice in those who promoted it, and pen'd or directed the Order, and of great Inadvertence at least in all that passed it. And the third an Impudent and Foolish Calumny, Mr. Hartley having more than once upon considerable Occasions, given undeniable Evidence of his Constancy and Steadiness to his own Principles and Conscience, and therefore a further Confirmation of the Iniquity of those who inserted it, and of no less Incivility towards their own Members; and of like Inadvertence at least in all who consented to the Passing of it.

The Order of Reference had been reasonable, if the Information had been fair and probable, and the Persons named indifferent and impartial. But the contrary of this may be suspected, since the Information being so faulty, yet all but one subscribed the Report, which was referred to any three of them.

The second part of the Order plainly discovers how well affected these Gentlemen are to the Observation of the *Lords day*, and what regard they have to any Laws, which suit not with their Humour. For the Warrants concerning that, are the only Warrants, which they call in to Inspect and Suppress.

It also as plainly discovers what sense of Religion they have, of the Honor of God, and of the Good of Human Souls; and whose Servants and Agents they are. Prophanation and irreverent
use

use of things Sacred is a disrespect to God, and a pleasant Spectacle to the Devil. And the Apostate Spirits, as often as they fail to draw Men into Evil, do presently apply themselves either to distract them with Business and Cares, or to divert them with Pleasures and Recreations from that important Good, which cannot be attained by such as seldom attend to it with serious and deep Meditation, but easily lay that aside. And for those whose Minds are all the six days incumbred with many things of the World, to be diverted a good part of the Seventh from that One thing necessary, cannot but greatly gratifie those malicious Spirits; and to see so much of their Work done to their hands; nay, and the very Ministers of God for the Good of Men (as Magistrates are ordained to be) become Voluntiers in their Service for the Promotion of it, contrary to their Oaths, and contrary to the Laws, they were appointed to execute. I doubt there will be few found to have been very sound Christians, who have little regarded the Observation of this Day. And certain I am, that one of the Best and Wisest Justices that ever *England* had, the late Lord Chief Justice *Hale*, was a very Religious observer of it himself; and did greatly recommend it to others upon all occasions, both by Word and Writing, and largely in his last Instructions before his death to his Grand-Children, not only from Principles, Authorities, and Arguments of Reason, but also from his own long and frequent Experience.

They conclude this notable Order with certain Recommendations to their fellow Justices, (which is the third and last part of it) and with great appearance of *Justice and Equity*; but in truth with great *Presumption* against the Laws, great *Insolence* against her Majesties Recommendations and Commands, and great Artifice to frustrate or obstruct the Effect thereof, and of that very Order of Sessions, which was made in Obedience and pursuant thereunto. Nothing can have a more plausible appearance of Reason and Justice than the Prevention of *Irregular Proceedings*; and Notice of one's Offence and Accuser before Condemnation: And by the Common Law no Man can be Convicted but after Summons and Tryal *per Pares*. But if the Wisdom of the Great Council of the Nation have thought fit in some special Cases, of notorious common Offences against the Laws, not only of the Nation, but of God and Nature too, and for which the Penalties are small in comparison of the Crimes, to omit both,

and

and

and to appoint a *more expeditious way* of Proceeding, it is a very bold Presumption in a little Faction at a Session to make themselves wiser than the Laws; and to assume to themselves so much of a Legislative Power, as to prescribe to their Fellows Rules to act by contrary to the Laws, and to correct the Methods directed by the Laws as *Irregular Proceedings*.

The like Presumption it is to *prescribe narrower Bounds* to themselves and their Fellows to act in, under a new name of *their own District*, than their Majesties and their Commission hath set them, or their Oaths will allow them to observe. It is true, for Licensing of Ale-houses, and taking Accounts, and making of Officers, and such like things, which cannot so well be done by Strangers, as by those who live in the same Division, the Justices in all Counties have used (as by Law they may) to divide both the Trouble and the Profit, (which in those things accrue to their Clerks) between them, and to act in their own Divisions; neither indeed can they ordinarily do otherwise, unless they would neglect their own, these being matters which are usually dispatched in all the several Divisions throughout the whole County at the same time. But it is a new Project to extend this to the Punishing of Offenders, thereby to hinder the Execution of these Laws. And such is that of *acquainting all Offenders who are their Accusers*, which would certainly deter People from giving any Information (the Penalties being so small) against the most notorious, malicious, impudent, and desperate Offenders. A much more just and reasonable Course was it therefore, which Mr. Hartley took, to let any one know who was his Accuser, if he would be bound to Prosecute him.

These being matters of very bold Presumption against the Laws, and greatly to the hinderance of the Execution of them, are so much the greater *Insolence against her Majesty*, who by her gracious Letter had recommended and command the strict Execution of them with so much Earnestness, as may be seen before.

But this is not all; Upon Thursday Morning according to this Order the Constables brought in the Warrants remaining in their Custody for the Offences aforesaid, of which no small number had been neglected to be Executed, probably by some secret underhand Encouragement, and by these Gentlemen were torn or suppressed, under pretence of Illegality and Irregularity; by which, what they understand may be judged by what hath been observed already.

And

And here, having seen before how observant they are of the Laws of the Land, and of her Majesties Recommendations and strict Commands, it is fit to take a little notice *What just regard they have to their own Rules and Prescriptions*; which they no sooner make than they notoriously violate; unless they were made only in favor of such as Transgress the Laws, which the Queen requires to be Executed, but not in favor of those, who worthily endeavor to promote the just Execution of them. Which is the Case of Sir R. B. a Gentleman of Quality, a Bar. who came over with the Prince, and a Person of very good Reputation: yet was not he vouchsafed this Favor to have so much as a Summons, or any civil Notice from their Worships.

Nay, though upon a general Notice from others, That his name was in question there for what he had done in this matter, he sent a very civil Letter with an Abstract of the Methods of the Proceedings before related, and such a Register of the Warrants as is before described to Sir C. L. the first Man of the said Committee, to give them all the Satisfaction that upon such general Notice was conceived requisite, and these were all delivered to him by a Gentleman of good Quality before the Report was made, yet would the said Sir C. L. and his Fellows needs proceed in that rash, ungentile, false and scandalous Report notwithstanding; as if there had been no Authority in the Nation to superintend or control their Actions. Nor could he obtain the favor to be by them informed of his Accuser, or of the Particulars of his Offence, that he might have given a more particular and complete Satisfaction, if there was occasion, before he was so scandalously misrepresented by the Committee in their Report to the Bench, notwithstanding the Recommendations of their Order aforesaid for that purpose in the case of any of the foulest Offenders without Exception. Which is plain Demonstration that it was not any sincere regard to Justice, but under Pretence of that an evil Design to obstruct and discourage the Execution of these Laws, contrary to the Queens Letter, and to the Order of Sessions thereupon, that was intended by some of them in those Illegal Recommendations. The Letter was as followeth:

S I R,

October 16. 1691.

Forasmuch as the Malice of Wicked Men has so far prevailed, as to misrepresent that Undertaking in which, with diverse worthy Persons I am happily concerned for promoting the Execution of the Laws against Profaneness and Debauchery in conformity to your Order of Sessions, and on that account have not spared to calumniate me: I judged the true Representation of this matter to be so necessary, that I have prevailed with those Gentlemen to permit me to lay before you the Methods they take in that Affair. By which it will manifestly appear, that it is so far from being Profitable, that it has been, and is, no small Charge to them. And in order to spread this yet further they have been moved to set the Example of London and Middlesex before the rest of the Kingdom, which required the Reprinting of several thousands of both Your Orders, which have been by them sent throughout the Kingdom, and of which they have already seen the happy Effects. And forasmuch as all your Examination of Constables, as to the Execution of Warrants, cannot but be defective, since you have no Account wherewith to charge them: These Gentlemen have here also sent you an exact Account of all the Printed Warrants which have been granted from the very first, (except the last Fortnights which are not yet Registered, but will be against your next Petty Sessions) by which you may call every Constable to an Account for the Execution of the Warrants, which have been delivered to him. Which Account was designed and prepared for the several Petty Sessions where they judged the Examination thereof most proper to be taken, had not this Misrepresentation forced them to a Vindication at this time. I am

Sir,

Your most Humble Servant, R. B.

For Sir C. L.

These

R. B.

By this Letter it appears that those Gentlemen knew then of no other Calumny raised against them at the Sessions, than that of making Profit to themselves by this Undertaking; which they so fully answer, that we find not any touch of any such thing in the Report. And this, and what any prudent and ingenious Man might have observed upon the Letter and other Papers, might have satisfied their Worships (had they been such) how little credit was to be given to the rest, which the bare Truth of the Case hath so far confuted, though those innocent Gentlemen were not permitted to know what they were. Of the which, that the Reader may judge I shall here insert The Report.

WE, whose Names are subscribed, in pursuance of an Order of Reference to us heretofore annexed, have made diligent Inquiry and examined into the particulars to us referred; and upon the whole matter our Opinions are, First, it appearing to us upon Oath, that there is, and for some months last past has been, an Office or Society kept in Lincoln's-Inn, commonly called Sir R. B's Office in the Chamber of Mr. Y—; And that there does preside Sir R. B. assisted with Mr. Hartley, and thasaid Mr. Y—. That when any Constables have recourse to the said Office, the said Sir R. B. gives Directions, Recommendations, and Throghout the respective Constables personating a Justice of the Peace, the said Mr. Hartley speaking but little, and being made use of only as a Property to sign all the Warrants presented by the said Sir R. B. and Mr. Y—. That when the Constables go to Mr. Hartley, to his Habitation in London, to complain of the Irregularity of the said Warrants, he bids them come to the said Office: That we have perused about 900 Warrants of Conviction, signed by the said Mr. Hartley: That many of them are illegal, some of them Negatory and trifling, and all of them irregular: It appears to us that some are convicted for suffering Tippling in their Houses, that never sold any drink; others convicted that had been dead two years before the time of Conviction: That there are about 400 Informers belonging to the said Office, who carry out Warrants from the said Office ready fill'd up, and tender the same to be signed to several Justices, who if they do (upon not being well satisfied with these Proceedings) refuse to sign the same, are threatened to have their Names Returned into the said Office. And we are of Opinion, that the Multiplicity of those Irregular Convictions is a great Hinderance to their Majesties Revenue of Excise, and a great Oppression upon the People, and tends to the Ruine of most Victuallers and Alehouse-Keepers, and makes

the present Government uneasy to them, as appears to us by their frequent and dayly Complaints: That the Proceedings of the said Office or Society is a great Affront to, and so resented by the whole Commission of Peace: And we are of Opinion that such Warrants as are issued out of the said Office, not executed, should be superseded.

That these Gentlemen used no ordinary Diligence to find out all the Faults they could, and to amplify and misrepresent what ever appearance of any Fault they met with, as foully and maliciously as they could, and as the light and frothy Wit of some of them could devise, is very apparent. But that they wilfully refused to use that Honest and Upright Diligence and Integrity in the Examination of the Truth of the matters referred to them, which became them, and they ought to have done, is apparent from this, which they cannot deny, that they made their report *ex parte*; without sending any notice to Sir R. B. or acquainting him with the particulars of their Information against him, although he was ready to have given them that satisfaction, which might have prevented, not only their so foully and unworthily injuring him, but also their so unadvisedly exposing their own Persons, and their Instincts and Unworthiness to be entrusted with the Administration of Justice, and the Execution of the Laws; notwithstanding the Recommendations of the very Order of Reference, which in this case had been just and reasonable to have been observed.

It appearing to us, say they, upon Oath: But whose Oath this was they resolutely conceal, and will not discover; or who were their Informers, so much as to their Brother Justice, who is concerned in it, and was upon the Bench most part of the Sessions, notwithstanding the said Order of Reference. Which is another great Evidence of Partiality, and little regard to Justice or Common Civility. And this justly moves those Gentlemen, who know the matter of the Report to be false, to believe with much assurance that the Committee cannot produce any one Person of Credit, that either did, or will affirm it upon Oath in such manner as they have set it out. And if this be so, how foul a Fault it is in them thus to amplify and misrepresent Informations which they have received upon Oath, I leave to others to determine. But in case they had had some malicious desperate Fellow, or some conceited Knight of the Post, who could have dressed up his Story in this manner, is all that such Men will say upon their Oath, presently to be credited and solemnly reported? Ought not Circumstances to be

be considered, and Probabilities be well weighed before any thing be concluded, and especially in such a Case as this? Certainly there was no such diligent Examination as is pretended, and became them to have made; when what they had, and might have had on the other side was not regarded.

That there was any such Office commonly call'd Sir R. B's Office, or any at all set up by him, that he or any one else did ever *preside* at any of the Meetings of those Gentlemen; that there were any *respective Constables*, more than the two before-mentioned, who had any *Recourse* to that Chamber; that Sir R. B. did there *personate a Justice of the Peace*; that Mr. Haxley was *made use of as a Property* to sign Warrants; and that he did at any time bid any Constable *come to the said Office*, are all false, and impudent, scandalous Fictions, and plain Nugatory Trifles of some malicious, light and inconsiderate Persons. And having already set out the Truth of those things, from whence they took their Ground, I need say no more to confute them.

From what hath been said, and indeed from a due Consideration of the Report it self, it is manifest what Credit is to be given to their *Bare Assertion*, that of about 500 Warrants, which they say they perused; many were *Illegal*, some *Nugatory and Trifling*, and all *Irregular*, without the least mention of any other Particular, than those two, which I have before shewed, were Mistakes (if they were indeed Mistakes) not of the Justice, but of the Informers, and besides involuntary, and such as any man might easily commit; Which is a strong Presumption and weighty Argument, that they had no more or greater Instances; especially when we see them strain their Oratory to multiply two single Instances into plural Numbers. But for them to complain of Illegal, Nugatory, Trifling and Irregular! However their calling in, tearing, or suppressing so many Warrants under such Nugatory Pretences, is that for which I think they ought not to be trifled with.

The next Clause is true in part, *viz.* that the Informers did tender Warrants ready filled up to be signed to several Justices, who refused to sign them: But it is not only false, but improbable that they should threaten any Justices; and more improbable that they should threaten to *return their Names into any such Office*, which they never heard of, nor could be imagined to have any Power over them.

They conclude their Report with their Worship's Opinion; viz.
 1. *That the Multiplicity of the Convictions (which they please to call Irregular, by which what they intend is noted before) is a great Hindrance to their Majesties Revenue of Excises. On the Loyalty and Policy of the late Reigns! Not yet forgotten. But they forgot we have now Princes of more Magnanimity and Religion, than to stoop to so mean Policies as the Augmentation of their Revenue by the Prophanation of Religion, the Corruption of the Manners of the People, and the Violation of the Laws, which they are bound to maintain, and see that they be duly executed; and of more Prudence than to be so imposed upon by such Pretences, so to recede from their Authority as well as Duty. They add:*

2. *And a great Oppression upon the People, and tend to the Ruine of most Victuallers and Ale-house-keepers, and makes the present Government unwise to them.* The profound Wisdom and Goodness of these Gentlemen? Possibly so good Nature might extend to one sort more, which they thought not fit, or needles to name, being sufficiently comprised among these. And indeed it is a plain Case, that the Execution of Good Laws will always most certainly make any Government uneasy to those, who will not otherwise amend their Manners. And the Neglect thereof will as certainly in time make them as unease to the Government. But for raising of any honest and sober Victualler, and Ale-house-keeper by legal Convictions, the Parliaments which made the Laws, were, it seems, of another Opinion: And we may presume all those, who all this while have never since thought fit to alter them, to have continued of the same. Certainly these Gentlemen, who presume thus to argue against the Laws, very much forget themselves, that they were only at a Sessions of the Peace, and not of Parliament; or else they would never so unanimously have subscribed to such Stuff as this. But we have more of their Worship's Opinion; viz.

3. *That the Proceedings of the said Office (as they will needs call it) or Society is a great Affront to, and so resented by the whole Commission of the Peace.* By whole Commission, I suppose, they intend all the Justices in Commission, and not only their own Party; and if so, I must be excused from giving Credit to what they say; for I know the contrary: And though they had mustered all their Strength for this purpose, yet I am satisfied that there were divers very worthy Persons upon the Bench this Sessions, who well approved the Proceedings of those Gentlemen; but not those of this Committee. And had

the

the Committee but deigned that lawful Favour or Civility to the innocent and honest Gentlemen concerned; which they readily extend, even beyond Law, to Criminals and Offenders, they might have seen Cause to have better consulted their own Reputation, than to have exposed it by so mistaken and unworthy a Resentment.

Lastly, they conclude their Opinion, *That such Warrants, as are issued out of the said Office not executed, should be superceded.* There being no such Office, it is hard to say what Warrants they mean: But because we must suppose they did mean some, unless we suppose them to talk idly, we must understand all such as were sign'd by *Justice Hartley* at that Chamber. But had they been more than indeed they were, Why must they be superceded? Certainly they would be hard put to it to find a legal and regular Answer; and much more to answer for all those Warrants, which they have torn or suppress'd, very rashly, I doubt, and unadvisedly, as well as illegally.

This Report, notwithstanding all that hath been said, was confirmed (as they are pleased to term it) by an *Order of Sessions*, bearing date the 16th. of Oct. But though the *Minutes* were then taken, something to do there was, it seems, among some of them afterward, before they could settle the *Order*, which, though often call'd for, a Copy of it could not be had till that Day Fortnight; and by that time they had at last hammered it out, how agreeable to the *Minutes* I know not, in the Form here following:

UPON reading the Report of Sir C. L. Sir J. S. &c. *Justices of the Peace* for this County, to whom it was referred, by Order of this Court of the 12th. of October instant, to examine, among other matters, what Inhabitants of this County have been convicted by Warrant from *Ralph Hartley Esq;* only of their Majesties *Justices of the Peace* for this County, for Tipling, exposing Goods to Sale on the Lord's Day, or any other Offences for Prophanation thereof, whereby it appeared the said *Mr. Hartley* hath signed above 500 Warrants of Conviction, many of which are illegal; and that some Persons were convicted for suffering Tipling in their Houses, that never sold any Drink; others that had been dead two years before Conviction. It is thought fit and ordered by this Court, That the said Report be, and it is hereby confirmed; and that all Constables and Headboroughs within their respective Divisions in this County, do attend their Majesties *Justices of the Peace* for this County, at their Petty Sessions, to be held within their several Divisions, with all such Warrants of Conviction as now are, or shall hereafter come to their Hands, against any Person or Persons,

Persons, for Tipling, exposing of Fruit, or other Goods to Sale on the Lords Day, or any Offence for Prophanation thereof; and that the said Justices of the Peace, at their said Petty Sessions, do Summon before them the Persons Convicted of any such Offences, and the Informers, and suspend the Execution of, or discharge all such Warrants as they shall find to be illegal; and also to examine what Monies have been levied by Virtue of any such Warrants, how the same hath been disposed of, and to whom by Name, and by whose Warrant of Conviction such Money hath been levied, and certify what shall appear to them upon such Examination to their Majesties Justices of the Peace, at the next General Sessions of the Peace to be held for this County.

Per Cur Harcourt.

In the Recital in the beginning of this Order it is said indeed, *whereby it appeared*, &c. but what that was, whereby it appeared, it doth not there appear; yet they think fit and positively order, *That the said Report be, and is hereby confirmed*; though that it self be another Difficulty what they intend by *confirmed*? It was Matter of Fact, which was refer'd to the Committee to examine and report; and is it fit for the Bench to confirm what perhaps may in Fact be false? And if it be so, will their Confirmation amend it? And not rather be a blemish upon the Proceedings of the Court, and the whole Commission (as they call it) wherein are divers worthy Persons, who were then absent; and if they had been present, would doubtless have opposed and disclaimed these Proceedings. Well affected Gentlemen, it seems, they were, who were upon the Bench, and agreed to this Order; or at least who have been hammering of it ever since, and easily perswaded to call in Question 500 Warrants and 500 more to that, if so many come to the Constable's hands before the next petty Sessions; because the Committee tell them that many of them were illegal and all irregular, without naming any one Particular for which they are so. In case some had been convicted for suffering Tipling, that never sold Drink; and some who were dead two years before (which yet are such strains as no way become the Gravity and Integrity of a Magistrate) or any other mistake had been in the Information, (which doubtless should have been set out, if any such could have been found,) I would know of their Worships, whether this had made those Warrants illegal or irregular? And what had been the proper Legal and Regular Course to have been taken, and by whom, in such a Case?

But

But of the 300 Warrants, suppose many had in truth been Illegal: Were all those 300 Warrants for Prophanation of the Lord's Day? Or, if they were not, were none of the rest Illegal? If any of the rest were illegal, why are such only as were for the Prophanation of that Day ordered to be brought in? If none of all the rest were illegal, it is plain that Mr. H. acted commonly with good Understanding of what he did; and if he had erred in one or two Particulars, those might easily have been expressed in the Order. And since they are not, there must have been some Reason for it: And what more likely than that there were no such as they could rely upon, and therefore resolved upon a General Allegation, though a meer Calumny, to support their Design to interrupt and discourage the Execution of these Laws, by an Order of Sessions, which they found they could not do by checking and discouraging the Informers in private? Otherwise it had been certainly more proper for the Committee to have reported the particular Instances and Cases wherein they had been illegal or Irregular, and their Opinions thereupon with their Reasons; and such a Report might have been proper to have been confirmed by the Opinion of the Bench, for the directions of particular Justices. But otherwise to require the Constables to bring in all these Warrants to be inspected at the petty Sessions, was unnecessarily to trouble the Country, and to give occasion of Dissension and Confusion among the Justices themselves.

And I desire to know by what Law or Authority the whole Bench can order the Justices at the petty Sessions, to summon the Persons convicted and the Informers, (who perhaps are not known) and to suspend the Execution of so many Warrants till they have reheard the Causes over again? And what Authority the Justices at their Petty Sessions have to put any such Trouble upon the Officers in such Cases, or upon the Informers either?

But to conclude this Matter, these things are apparent to any one who considers them, from these Orders and Report themselves, without more of doe.

1. First, That these Gentlemen, who have made all this stir without any better ground, were Persons *not very well affected* to the Execution of these Laws.

2. That that was apparently a great Cause, why so many resorted to Mr. Hartley, with Informations, who making Conscience of executing the Laws according to his Oath, heard them patiently, and gave them all convenient Dispatch.

3. That

That these Gentlemen, who were the first occasion of this Re-
 tort and Trouble to Mr. H. by wilful Neglect of their Duties, were
 unworthily interested against him for it, and for his honest conscientious
 discharge of his

4. That though they have been so greatly (though undeservedly
 and unworthily) incensed against him, as appears by their indecent
 and scandalous treatment of him in this matter; yet have they not
 been able to assign any one particular of Illegality or Irregularity in any
 one Warrant, of about 500. which they say they have perused, signed
 by him. And that this is a great Demonstration of his Justice, and wor-
 thy Behaviour in all this business, and of their Iniquity and unworthy
 Malice against him.

5. That the Report, and this Order of Sessions to confirm it, and
 the matters therein contained, tend directly to the Interruption and
 Disturbance, and Discouragement of the Execution of these Laws,
 which (as was their Duty) her Majesty had specially recommended
 and required to be faithfully and diligently executed.

6. That all this is done without any particular just and manifest
 Reason, which is therefore a manifest and bold Contempt of her Ma-
 jesties Authority.

And now, upon consideration of this whole matter, which is so
 gross and palpable as cannot be denied, and with doubtless moves the
 Indignation of all Serious and Vertuous People in the Nation, many
 good People will be concerned to know, whether by our Laws and
 Constitution there be no due Correction for such Attacks of Arbi-
 trary Government? To which, for their Satisfaction I can assure
 them that there is sufficient, and that by the special Favour and
 Provision of God, we have now such Persons, and such Judges upon
 the Bench, that it is not to be questioned, but some effectual course
 will be taken for the due correction of those bold Presumptions a-
 gainst the Laws, and Insolencies against her Majesties Authority,
 and for a better Regulation of the Commission of the Peace for this
 County for the future.

IN 25.